

2026/2027

Complaints Policy

WHOLE SCHOOL

Policy Owner:
Head Teacher



SINCE 1973

1. Purpose and Scope

Morna International College is committed to resolving concerns fairly, promptly and at the lowest appropriate level while protecting the welfare of students and maintaining constructive relationships with parents and guardians. This policy provides a clear three-stage route for complaints about the school's provision, decisions, actions or omissions.

This procedure applies principally to complaints from parents or guardians of current students and, where appropriate, from students themselves. The school may apply the same principles to complaints from former families or other service users where it is reasonable to do so. It does not create an employment grievance or disciplinary route for staff.

2. Matters Outside This Procedure

The following matters are normally handled under the relevant separate procedure rather than this Complaints Policy: staff employment grievances, staff disciplinary matters and workplace harassment; safeguarding or child-protection concerns and allegations against staff or volunteers; admissions decisions where a separate admissions or review procedure applies; examination or assessment appeals concerning marking, grading, results or other matters falling within an awarding body's own review or appeals procedures; requests or complaints concerning data-protection rights; and complaints about services delivered by an independent external provider where that provider has its own contractual complaints route.

Complaints concerning the school's own administration or handling of examination entries, access arrangements or examination procedures may be considered under this Complaints Policy where appropriate.

Fee, invoice and other contractual payment disputes should first be raised under the school's Finance Policy or with the Finance Office. A complaint about the way a fee dispute has been administered may be considered under this policy, but the complaints procedure does not replace any contractual, consumer or other legal remedies that may be available.

Where a matter overlaps procedures, the Head Teacher will identify the lead procedure and explain this to the person raising the complaint; where the Head Teacher is involved in the complaint or a conflict of interest would arise, the Executive Director will identify the lead procedure; where the Executive Director is involved in the complaint or a conflict of interest would arise, the Proprietor will identify the lead procedure.

Safeguarding procedures always take priority where a child may be at risk of harm.

3. General Principles

Complaints should be raised as soon as reasonably practicable and normally within three months of the event concerned or of the person raising the complaint becoming aware of it. The school may consider an older matter where there is a good reason for delay or where the seriousness of the concern justifies review. A complaint should clearly explain the concern, the relevant facts, any steps already taken and the outcome being sought.

The school will act proportionately, objectively and without retaliation. Relevant persons will have a fair opportunity to provide information and respond to significant allegations. Information will be shared only with those who reasonably need it for investigation, safeguarding, decision-making or legal compliance. No person who is the subject of a complaint will determine that complaint against themselves.

4. Meaning of "School Day" and Time Limits

For this policy, a "school day" means a day on which the school is open to students for normal teaching, as set out in the school's published academic calendar. Weekends, public holidays, staff-only closure days and school holidays do not count as school days. For the purpose of calculating the response times in this policy, a complaint received during a holiday period will be treated as received on the first school

day of the next term, although the school may act sooner where the matter is urgent, particularly where safeguarding or safety is involved.

Where a stated timescale cannot reasonably be met because of the complexity of the matter, the absence of a key person or another significant reason, the school will inform the person who raised the complaint, explain the delay and provide an updated timescale.

5. How to Submit a Complaint

Stage 1 concerns may be raised directly with the relevant member of staff through the usual school communication channels or through the School Office. Formal Stage 2 complaints and Stage 3 review requests must be submitted in writing. They may be emailed to info@micibiza.com with the relevant subject line stated below, delivered by hand to the School Office, or posted to Morna International College, Carretera San Miguel Km. 3.5, 07814 Santa Gertrudis de Fruitera, Ibiza (Balears), Spain. Written complaints delivered by hand or posted should be marked **“Private and Confidential – Complaint”**.

Complaints about the Head Teacher or Executive Director must be submitted through the confidential routes set out in section 9.

The School Office will forward the correspondence to the appropriate person responsible for considering the complaint and will not determine the complaint itself. The school will provide reasonable assistance where a person has difficulty setting out a complaint in writing, including, where appropriate, agreeing a written record of the complaint following a meeting.

6. Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Most concerns should first be raised with the member of staff closest to the issue, such as the class teacher, subject teacher, tutor or relevant coordinator. Where the concern relates to that person, or direct contact would be inappropriate, it should be raised with the relevant Head of Section. The person handling Stage 1 will seek to understand the concern and resolve it through clarification, a meeting, an explanation, an apology where appropriate, corrective action or agreed next steps.

The school will normally acknowledge a Stage 1 concern within two school days and seek to resolve it within ten school days. Serious matters and matters for which informal handling would be inappropriate may proceed directly to the relevant formal route. Complaints about the Head Teacher or Executive Director follow the procedure in section 9.

7. Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

A formal complaint should be addressed to the Head Teacher and submitted with the subject line “Stage 2 Formal Complaint – Private and Confidential”. The Head Teacher is the Stage 2 decision-maker and may conduct the investigation personally or appoint an investigator who is sufficiently independent of the matters complained of. The Head Teacher remains responsible for the Stage 2 outcome.

The complaint will normally be acknowledged within two school days. The investigation may include reviewing records, speaking with relevant persons and requesting further information. The school will normally issue a written outcome within fifteen school days of acknowledgement. The response will explain, so far as confidentiality permits, whether the complaint is upheld, partly upheld or not upheld, the main reasons for the decision and any appropriate action.

8. Stage 3 – Review by the Executive Director

If the person making the complaint remains dissatisfied after Stage 2, they may request a review within ten school days of the Stage 2 outcome. The request must be addressed to the Executive Director and submitted with the subject line “Stage 3 Review Request – Private and Confidential”. The Executive Director will normally be the Stage 3 reviewer for complaints determined at Stage 2 by the Head Teacher,

subject to the alternative arrangements set out in Section 9 where the complaint concerns the Head Teacher or Executive Director, or where there is otherwise a conflict of interest.

The review is not automatically a complete reinvestigation. It will consider whether the Stage 2 process was fair and reasonable, whether relevant evidence was considered, whether material conclusions were supported by the information available, whether the outcome was reasonable and proportionate, and whether any significant new evidence requires further enquiry. The Executive Director may confirm the outcome, vary findings, require limited further investigation or direct appropriate corrective action.

The final internal outcome will normally be communicated within twenty school days of receiving the review request. For complaints following the ordinary Stage 1–3 route, this concludes the school’s internal procedure.

9. Complaints About the Head Teacher or Executive Director

Complaints about the Head Teacher

A complaint about the Head Teacher must not be determined by the Head Teacher. It should be submitted directly to the Executive Director, either by email with the subject line “Complaint about the Head Teacher – Private and Confidential” or by hand or post in a sealed envelope marked “For the Executive Director – Private and Confidential”.

The Executive Director will conduct or commission the formal investigation and issue the formal outcome. If the person making the complaint remains dissatisfied, they may request a final internal review within ten school days of receiving that outcome.

The Proprietor will conduct the review or appoint an appropriately independent person who has had no prior involvement in the matter to conduct it. The reviewer may confirm the outcome, vary findings, require limited further investigation or direct appropriate corrective action.

The final review outcome will normally be communicated within twenty school days of receiving the review request and will conclude the school’s internal procedure.

Complaints about the Executive Director

A complaint about the Executive Director must not be determined by the Executive Director. It should be submitted directly to the Proprietor, either by email with the subject line “Complaint about the Executive Director – Private and Confidential” or by hand or post in a sealed envelope marked “For the Proprietor – Private and Confidential”.

The Proprietor will conduct or commission the formal investigation and issue the formal outcome. If the person making the complaint remains dissatisfied, they may request a final internal review within ten school days of receiving that outcome.

The Proprietor will appoint an appropriately independent person, normally external to the school, who has had no prior involvement in the matter and is independent of the matters complained of, to conduct the review. The reviewer may confirm the outcome, vary findings, require limited further investigation or direct appropriate corrective action.

The final review outcome will normally be communicated within twenty school days of receiving the review request and will conclude the school’s internal procedure.

10. Safeguarding and Serious Misconduct

Any complaint indicating that a child may be at risk of harm will be referred immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the school’s safeguarding procedures.

Any allegation that a member of staff or volunteer has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, or has behaved in a way that raises a safeguarding concern regarding their suitability to work with children will be managed in accordance with the school’s safeguarding and allegations procedures. Where required by

law, or where necessary to protect a child, the matter will be referred to the appropriate external authorities or agencies.

The complaints procedure will not be conducted in a way that could compromise a safeguarding investigation or any criminal, regulatory or other statutory process. Where necessary, consideration of a complaint under this procedure may therefore be paused, restricted or dealt with separately while another process is ongoing.

The person making the complaint will be informed of this, where appropriate, but the school may be unable to provide details where doing so would breach confidentiality, data protection requirements, safeguarding obligations or otherwise prejudice another investigation or process.

11. Anonymous Complaints and Separated Parents

Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be considered taking into account the seriousness and credibility of the information provided, the welfare of students, whether the matter can reasonably and fairly be investigated, and whether another school procedure or referral to an external authority or agency is required.

An anonymous complaint may be recorded, investigated and acted upon even where it is not possible to provide a formal response. Any information indicating that a child may be at risk of harm will be dealt with in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures regardless of whether the person raising the concern has identified themselves.

Separated Parents

Where parents are separated, the school will ordinarily recognise the rights and responsibilities of each person who has parental responsibility or equivalent parental authority, subject to applicable law and any court order or other binding restriction of which the school has been formally notified.

Either parent with the relevant parental responsibility or authority may raise a complaint concerning their child. The school may request evidence of parental responsibility, parental authority or any relevant court order or restriction where necessary.

The school will not act as an intermediary in disputes between parents and will act on the basis of the information and legal documentation reasonably available to it. Where appropriate, the school may communicate separately with each parent.

Information will only be shared where there is an appropriate lawful basis to do so. Confidential or personal information relating to one parent will not automatically be disclosed to the other.

12. Fairness, Confidentiality and Student Voice

The school may speak with students where this is necessary and appropriate when considering a complaint. In doing so, the school will take account of the student's age and maturity, safeguarding considerations and the need to avoid unnecessary, repeated or leading questioning. Any involvement of a student will be proportionate and handled sensitively.

No student will be disadvantaged or treated unfavourably because they, or their parent or guardian, have raised a genuine concern or complaint.

Complaints will be handled as confidentially as reasonably possible. However, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where information needs to be shared to safeguard or protect a child, comply with

a legal or regulatory obligation, obtain appropriate professional advice, investigate the complaint fairly or allow another person a fair opportunity to respond.

Information will only be shared with those who reasonably need it for these purposes and in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.

The outcome of a complaint will not normally disclose confidential employment or disciplinary action, or personal information relating to another student, parent, member of staff or other individual, unless there is an appropriate lawful basis for doing so.

13. Records, Retention and Reporting

The Head Teacher is the policy owner. The School Office will maintain the central complaints log on behalf of the Head Teacher. The log will record formal complaints and significant informal complaints, the stage reached, the person responsible for the decision, relevant dates, the outcome and any follow-up action. Investigation material and correspondence will be stored securely, with access limited to those who require it.

Formal complaint records will be retained in accordance with the school's approved records-retention schedule and its Data Protection and Privacy Policy. Records may be retained for longer where required for safeguarding, legal proceedings, insurance, awarding-body requirements or other applicable legal or regulatory purposes. At the end of the applicable retention period, records will be securely deleted, destroyed or anonymised as appropriate.

At least once each term, the Head Teacher will provide the Executive Director with an anonymised or appropriately aggregated report on complaint numbers, stages, broad themes, outcomes, recurring issues, overdue cases and actions for improvement. The Executive Director will report significant themes, risks and any required action to the Proprietor. Individual confidential details will be included only where necessary for oversight, safeguarding or legal reasons.

14. Persistent, Unreasonable or Abusive Conduct

The school distinguishes between a person who raises concerns or complaints persistently and communication or conduct that becomes unreasonable or unacceptable. Communication may be considered unacceptable where it is abusive, threatening, discriminatory, excessively repetitive, knowingly false, demands disproportionate levels of contact, refuses reasonable communication routes or causes unreasonable disruption to the school's work.

The Head Teacher may put proportionate communication arrangements in place, such as requiring a single point of contact, written communication only, reasonable limits on the frequency of contact, or declining to revisit a matter that has already been fully concluded unless significant new evidence is provided. Where the Head Teacher is the subject of the complaint, the Executive Director will make this decision. Where the Executive Director is the subject of the complaint, the Proprietor will make this decision. Any restrictions will be explained in writing, kept under review and will not prevent genuine safeguarding concerns from being raised.

15. Outcomes and Learning

Where a complaint is upheld or identifies an area for improvement, action may include an apology, correction of inaccurate information, review of a decision, additional support, staff guidance or training, changes to procedures, measures to reduce risk or a review of relevant policies.

An apology or action taken to improve the school's provision does not necessarily amount to an admission of legal liability. Themes arising from complaints will be used to support school improvement while respecting confidentiality.

16. External Routes

Completion of the school's internal procedure does not prevent a person from contacting an external authority or body where it has jurisdiction. The appropriate route will depend on the nature of the matter,

and an external body may decline to consider a complaint that falls outside its powers or where another procedure should be followed first.

Depending on the issue, possible external routes may include: the Agencia Española de Protección de Datos (AEPD) for matters within its data-protection jurisdiction; the appropriate child-protection, police, prosecution or emergency services for safeguarding or alleged criminal matters; the relevant examination or awarding body for matters falling within its procedures; the Departament d'Inspecció Educativa de les Illes Balears, or another competent Spanish or Balearic education authority, where it has jurisdiction; and appropriate consumer, civil or judicial routes where applicable.

For immediate danger or urgent safeguarding concerns, the appropriate emergency or child-protection services should be contacted without waiting for the school's complaints procedure to conclude. Data-protection complaints may be made to the AEPD in accordance with its published procedures.

17. Related School Policies

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding Policy, Admissions Policy, Finance Policy, examination and assessment Policy, Data Protection and Privacy Policy, Parent/Carer Community Code, Staff Code of Conduct, Workplace Harassment Policy, Staff Handbook and the applicable staff grievance and disciplinary procedures.

18. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following any significant legal, regulatory or procedural change. Contact details, responsible roles, external routes and retention arrangements will be checked as part of each review.

Policy Control

Policy Title	Complaints Policy 2026/2027
Policy Owner	Head Teacher
Responsible Officers	Head Teacher; Executive Director; Proprietor; School Office (complaints log)
Applies to	Parents and guardians of current students and, where appropriate, students; other individuals at the school's discretion. Staff employment matters are excluded.
Approved by	Executive Director
Date Approved	3 rd September 2026
Review Frequency	At least annually and sooner following significant legal, regulatory or procedural change.
Next Review Date	3 rd September 2027
Version	1.0